



## Washington DNR August 10-14 Fuels Outlook

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**Fuel Conditions:** Current – Conditions rebounded over the weekend as expected with the eastern slopes of the Cascades and the Columbia Basin Areas having overcome the little bit of precipitation received there, while the far NE FDRAs and the Blue Mtns still have more ground to make up to dry out from last Thursdays storms. Cool and humid onshore flow with excellent overnight humidity has kept the west side from drying out much. ERC's in the Methow, Lower Yakima, Valley, and Upper Basin FDRA's where moistures was scant, are still above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. Chelan, Upper Yakima, and Lower Basin are all just below the 90<sup>th</sup>, while the Kanisku, Foothills, and Highlands are in the lower 80's. 1000 hr fuel moistures are 9-10% in the Methow, Upper and Lower Basin, and Valley FDRA's. 11`-13% in Chelan, Highlands, Upper and Lower Yakima, and both the Blue Mtn FDRAs, 15% in Foothills, and 17% in Kaniksu. On the west side 1000 hour moistures are indicating 19%.

Forecast – Dry and gusty conditions will not bring any new relief to the eastside. Accelerated drying in the NE corner should erase the last remnants of last week's moisture as far as fuel conditions go, and maintain values above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for the rest of the week. The push generating the gusty and dry conditions on the east side are associated with strong onshore flow, so the west side is only in for cool and humid weather helping to keep the fire potential down. No precipitation is expected so even with the cooler conditions after midweek, the overall fire danger isn't going to fall off at all.

### **Fire Behavior Potential:**

East of the Cascades today and Tuesday in the fire weather watch areas, very dry and gusty weather is going to present problems for new starts in any of the lower elevation areas and Cascade gaps. The very dry air associated with this front will be able to create high intensity fire activity with rapid growth in the flashier fuels and increased spotting potential in the lower elevation timber types as the needle cast becomes a better carrier and receptor. Another aspect of this front is poor overnight RH recoveries which should lead to very active overnight fires. After midweek, the fire behavior potential turns more vanilla as the weather moderates and things stay cooler than normal for a bit. That still means high intensity fire activity in rangeland fuels is possible and there may be some high intensity activity in the timber transition zones at lower elevations with spotting and torching, but large runs will be less likely.

West side fire activity should also stay subdued except for exposed areas with strong onshore flow keeping the RH values up. Grasses and scotch broom can be expected to exhibit high intensity, but slow spreading fire activity, while the timber understory is receptive to ignitions, but not capable of supporting fast spread under the forecast condntions.

Through Tuesday, the potential for large costly fires in Eastern Washington is very high. Wednesday through Friday, the potential moves down to High. On the west side there is low potential for large costly fires throughout the week.